TechNews

This handout is a guide to share information regarding deadlines, events and software version release dates. The intended audiences are PCHA and FPA-PM application users. New FPA updates, changes and work arounds to PCHA and FPA-PM are listed below. Web site links relative to the software updates are also highlighted.

New versions of FPA-PM and PCHA will be available June 1, 2005.

FPA-PM Version 1.3 Enhancements

Lookup Data Sets

A new lookup data set is available that includes corrections to previous invalid entries. It also contains mop-up rates so that some mop-up cost is considered in the cost constraints. This lookup dataset also contains the information necessary for helicopter use above 6,000 feet. Associating this dataset to your working planning dataset should be the first step before going further into version 1.3.

Aerial Resources

Helicopters are now modeled to be able to deliver partial crews, making multiple runs as needed to deliver all the crew (depending on helicopter capacity and size of crew.) Once the crew is delivered then bucket work begins. Crew production is also "phased" in with production increasing until all crew members have been delivered. In previous versions, the model assumed that the entire crew was delivered at once and began producing line simultaneously.

Helicopters are now available for work between 6,000 and 10,000 feet with their capability decreasing as altitude increases. Previously, they were not used if the fire event scenario occurred at an elevation greater than 6,000 feet.

Smokejumpers are now treated as ground resources with aerial delivery. In the same way as helicopters delivering crews, they may be delivered in "sticks" constrained by the facility capacity at their base. Production for this resource also increases as more individuals arrive at the fire event.

Ground Resources

The biggest change is the reduction in water tender contribution to engine production. In Version 1.2 a water tender was able to supply an unlimited number of engines. In 1.3, a water tender will support up to three engines. Beyond that number, engines will produce until they are out of water, then they revert to hand line production while the engine reloads with water.

Data Entry

Entering dispatch location facility and resource owners is the biggest user interface improvement in V1.3. There is only a single pick list to navigate instead of having to navigate several dropdowns. **Please Note**: The base for the pick list is derived from the FPU participants list. Good data entry under that tab will simplify dispatch location facility and resource owner assignments.

The existing dispatch locations sub-tab has a bug. When viewing the entry by clicking on the location link (underline) the information will display correctly. When clicking the Check Box and then Update, the facility owner goes away and must be reentered if any changes are made.

The resource owner selection is pretty straight forward:

- Click the dropdown list and select the owner. If you have multiple resource owners at a location the process is slightly different but uses standard Windows procedures.
    1. Click the dropdown list and then select the first owner.
    2. With the first owner highlighted, hold down the control (Ctrl) key and navigate with the mouse to the next desired owner
    3. Continue holding the Ctrl key down while clicking each owner until all desired resource owners have been selected
    4. Release the control key and click Submit to complete the selection process.

- Click the Dispatch Location link to verify your results.

Data validation error messages have been improved and now consist of the actual name of FMUs or Dispatch Locations instead of the cryptic numbers that were in some cases untraceable by the user.

Copying a dataset to "Working" generates a dialog box requiring a unique name, e.g. one that is not a duplicate NOR is not named Copy of Copy of...etc.

PCHA Version 1.2.31 **Latest Release notes**: http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/nfmas-beta/FPA-HA.htm**.**
PCHA user's guide is available at: http://fpa.nifc.gov/Library/PCHA_Users_Guide_03_20_2005.pdf.

Version 1.2.30 or later is REQUIRED for FPA-PM version 1.3 to m the Fire Event Scenario

The "Limitations, Constraints and Restrictions" white paper is the newest edition to the FPA library. Other white papers can be found at: http://fpa.nifc.gov/Library.htm